

Inquiry into the Child Support program

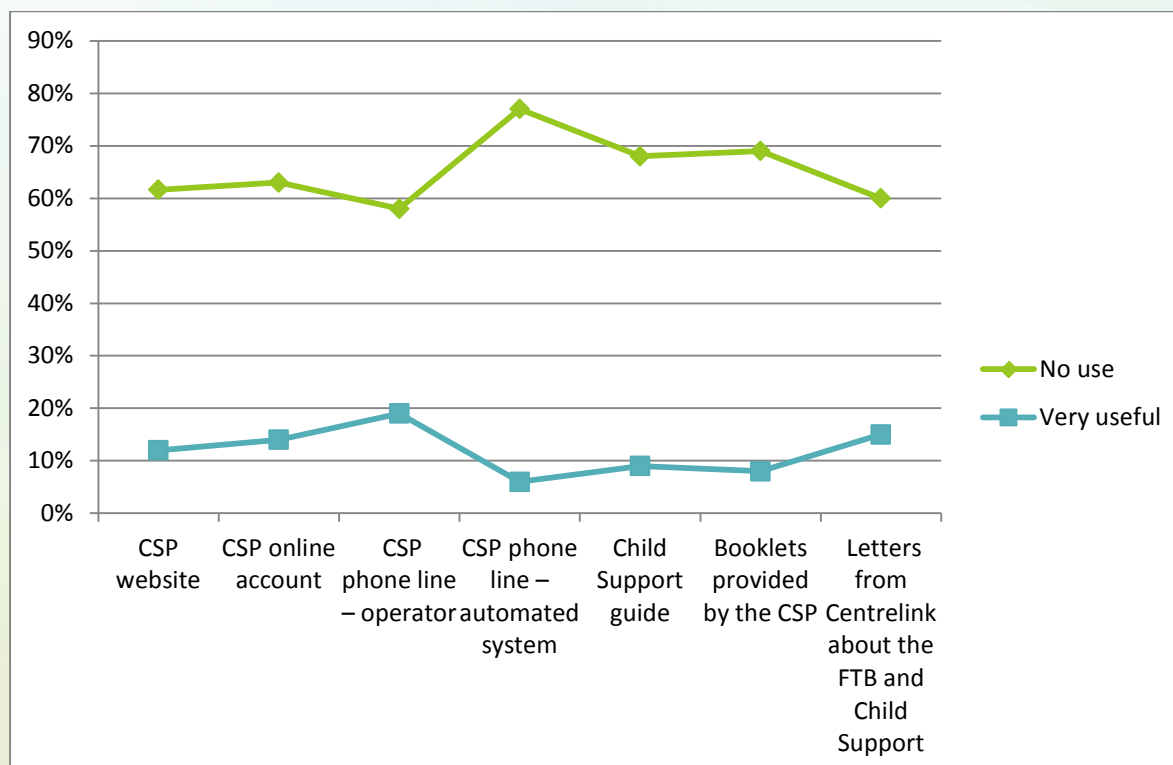
Snapshot 3 – Communication tools

Compiled on 20 August 2014.

Communication tools: this snapshot captures some questionnaire responses about how the Child Support program communicates with its clients. The questionnaire has been online for approximately 14 weeks and we have received over 11 000 responses. Though it isn't a statistical tool, it captures the opinions of the people who choose to complete it.

The questionnaire asks individuals to rate the communication tools used by the Child Support program on a scale from 1, being 'no use' to 5, being 'very useful'.

Results: In the graph below, the green line represents the percentage of people who thought a particular communication tool was either 'no use' or almost no use (1 or 2 on the scale). The blue line represents the percentage of people who thought a particular communication tool was useful or 'very useful' (4 or 5 on the scale). Most people found the communications tools not useful. The worst result was for the automated phone service, with only 6% of respondents rating it as useful, and 77% rating it as not useful. The best result was for the operator phone service, with 19% of respondents rating it as useful and 58% rating it as not useful.



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Some responses report positive experiences:

- CSA team members have always been helpful, kind and informative to my situation.
- I had to refer to the Handbook often to understand the process and more recently the Guide on the CSA website.
- The call centre staff are very helpful and knowledgeable.

However a much larger proportion report serious problems with communication tools:

- It is very common to get multiple duplicated letters. Phone line operators give conflicting information/advice. Wait times to speak to a phone line operator are extremely long and frequently you are transferred to wrong department or to someone who is not available.
- Letters are too frequent and have inconsistent information.
- The new CSA/DHS website is really hard to find anything - even the CSA staff hate it. Important and useful information is buried and inaccessible. The online system is really awkward and clunky and keeps logging me out. I can't always get in or load documents and I have trouble accessing correspondence and documents from CSA.
- There is too much semi-legal or government departmental jargon and you expect all people to fully understand and comprehend what you are saying. All the booklets and other information are totally useless, until you get it right with the language.

When asked about the Child Support program, many participants reported not understanding the system:

- The entire system is difficult to understand.
- Don't really understand how it works.
- Whenever I ring CSA with an inquiry I end call more confused than before I rang, they talk in circles and do not make sense.

Thanks to everyone who has completed the Questionnaire.

For inquiry information please visit our website: www.aph.gov.au/childsupport